Amendments To the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1   Claim 1 (previously presented): A switching network including rows and columns of
2   switches comprising:

3   a)   a first stage of switches defining a first column of said switching
4   network having input lines and output lines and comprising m (n x k)
5   input switches, wherein m is an integer number, n is an integer
6   number representing the number of input lines and k is an integer
7   number representing the number of output lines;

8   b)   a second stage of switches defining a second column of said switching
9   network comprising of m (k' x k') middle switches, k' is an integer
10   number representing the number of inputs and outputs; and

11   c)   a third stage of switches defining a third column of said switching
12   network comprising of m (k x n) switches; and

13   d)   a plurality of modules, each module defining a row of the switching
14   network and including one input switch of the first stage of switches,
15   one middle switch of the second stage of switches, one output switch
16   of the third stage of switches,
17   wherein the modules of the plurality of modules are identical and k' is selected
18   such that m*Q(k'/m) > k (where Q(x/y) denotes the quotient of dividing x by y)
19   to allow using m switches in the second stage.

1   Claim 2 (canceled).

1   Claim 3 (canceled).

1   Claim 4 (canceled).

1   Claim 5 (canceled).